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Japan's Navy: Politics and Paradox, 1971–2000

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functional order in which states like China can develop in reasonable peace. Though it may not want to acknowledge the fact, China benefits from the hegemony of U.S. order, and from its enforcement by American naval and air power.

Unlike the United States after World War II, China does not appear to offer a globally compelling ideology; in the absence of such an ideology, increasing Chinese power and assertiveness may frighten countries to resist China by generating power internally or externally. Internal power might take the form of developing nuclear weapons. Most likely, external balancing would take the form of intensified ties with the United States, though Taiwan, Vietnam, and India all might have reasons to become better acquainted with each other; even a weak Russia might contribute to a China-constraining coalition. Increases in Chinese power—if only for defensive purposes, like looking after China's energy interests abroad—might lead to resistance, because no country could be sure that Chinese intentions would not change. Counterbalancing would likely become more intense if China were to seek to move from regional hegemony to “geopolitical preeminence on a global scale.” The absence of an adequate consideration of such “balancing” may be the most significant weakness in this book. However, this is an impressive study of China's grand strategy, and it is worthy of serious examination.

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Woolley, Peter J. *Japan's Navy: Politics and Paradox, 1971–2000*. Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 1999. 166pp. \$49.95

In 1971 James Auer published *The Post-war Rearmament of Japanese Maritime Forces, 1945–1971*, “a book that [was] meant to challenge certain assumptions surrounding post–World War II Japan and its military, in particular its maritime forces.” Thirty years later, in post–Cold War Japan, some of those same suppositions persist. Of particular note, beliefs that Japanese rearmament is an American initiative, that Japan seeks only to provide for its own internal security while the United States is responsible for all external threats, and that militarism is returning to Japan, result in conflicts within Japan and among its Asian neighbors.

To many, the U.S.-Japan alliance both protects Japanese security interests and provides the cork that keeps Japanese militarism in the bottle. To students of Asia, the alliance follows a natural evolution resulting from the congruence of interests of two maritime nations as Japan reasserts its regional influence. To the prescient, the U.S.-Japan alliance is the bedrock for stability in a region rife with competing interests, developing conflicts, and unresolved animosities.

Peter Woolley, a professor of comparative politics at Fairleigh Dickinson University, has studied and written extensively on Japanese maritime development. He has written the next volume in this continuing story of Japan's defense-system evolution, masterfully picking up where Auer left off. Woolley provides a concise analysis of the Japanese Defense Forces' role in a world awakening to the transitional peace of the post–Cold War era.

His focus is an examination of the development and potential of the Japanese navy in the context of the U.S.-Japan Defense Security Alliance.

Rising from the ashes of World War II to become a legitimate regional power, Japan has developed the “second most powerful naval force in the world’s largest ocean.” This has led the United States and others to press Japan to contribute more to the security of the democratic and free-trading world, while its neighbors closely watch for signs of militarism that would signal resurgent nationalism and imperialism.

Through comparative analysis, Woolley presents the development of the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF), and the Japan Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) generally, in decision-making models developed within each of the book’s seven chapters. He sees the efficacy of Japan’s military might and fear of its potency as catalysts that will awaken the long-dormant Japanese aim for regional hegemony and dominance.

Woolley begins by examining the cultural implications of the expanding role of the JMSDF, followed by the institutional dimension of the legal constraints imposed by the Japanese constitution on JSDF activities. In subsequent chapters, he traces the impact of strategic purpose on the development of these forces as Japan accepted the role of defending its sea-lanes out to one thousand miles. Woolley follows with an examination of the domestic and international implications of Japan’s expanding capabilities and operations as it sent minesweepers to the Persian Gulf in 1991, and how the incremental changes in Japan’s defense policy over the last three decades resulted in tacit international and domestic acceptance of its participation in

peacekeeping operations. Woolley concludes with a valuable discussion of Japan’s changing defense posture and its relevance to aiding the United States in protecting shared vital interests in Asia.

Well researched and meticulously documented with an extensive bibliography, this book is an excellent reference for anyone wanting to understand Japanese defense policy and the forces that affect it. However, it is more than a book about the development of the JMSDF in the last three decades. It is also about the development of Japan’s national defense policy and the forces that move Japanese policy makers. It is a concise treatise that effectively uses maps and tables to help the reader understand key points.

Thus, the reader should be cautioned that the title of this book does not accurately convey its value as an examination of the strengths and weaknesses of the Japanese defense forces—not just the JMSDF—nor does it suggest the richness of the author’s analysis of Japanese policy making. This book provides much more, and it can serve as an excellent resource for gaining insight into the most important bilateral relationship of the United States.

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Lavell, Kit. *Flying Black Ponies*. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 2000. 376pp. \$32.95

Flying Black Ponies is an effective combination of combat narrative, squadron history, and personal memoir, telling the story of Light Attack Squadron 4 (VAL 4, or the “Black Ponies”), a naval aviation squadron stationed in the Mekong Delta